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Identical letters dated 12 November 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to alert you of the latest series of terror attacks committed by the Hamas terrorist organization against Israel. This series of attacks marks the largest assault by Hamas on innocent Israeli civilians since 2014.

On 12 November 2018, at 4.35 p.m. (GMT+2), Hamas operatives began a major terror escalation by firing an anti-tank guided missile into Israel. The missile targeted and hit a bus, severely injuring an Israeli soldier and setting the stage for a far more robust attack by Hamas against Israel.

Since the initial attack, Hamas has fired no less than 200 rockets into Israel in a non-stop assault lasting two full hours. The terror organization is intentionally targeting mass civilian population centres in Israel. Thankfully, Israel's Iron Dome air defence system has successfully intercepted and blocked more than 60 of these rockets from hitting Israeli communities, saving the lives of countless innocent civilians.

By 7.30 p.m. (GMT-5), Hamas had fired at least 400 rockets into Israel, targeting an even wider range of civilian population centres to include the cities of Be'er Sheva, Ashkelon and their surrounding communities. Rocket sirens have reached as far as the Dead Sea (99 km away). Hamas' rockets have hit and damaged at least one house and two apartment buildings in Ashkelon and one house in Netivot, resulting in 1 Israeli civilian dead and at least 25 people injured, some severely. Other rockets have landed near a bakery and supermarket filled with customers, causing massive fires.

In response to Hamas' escalation against Israel, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have targeted 70 Hamas and other terrorist organizations' strongholds and terror cells. IDF has also targeted the Hamas operatives who launched the rockets, as well as Hamas military compounds, facilities and three combat tunnels throughout the Gaza Strip.

To prevent escalation, Israel has worked tirelessly with all relevant international parties, including the United Nations. Hamas' latest onslaught, however, proves that the internationally recognized terrorist organization shows blatant disregard for the well-being of civilians — Israeli or Palestinian. Hamas also does not hesitate to use its own people as tools for its provocations.

Please recycle

After a day of rocket barrages, Hamas has again demonstrated that it is a terrorist organization. To the world, Hamas presents the civilians of Gaza as victims, but then uses them as human shields.

I call upon the Security Council to condemn Hamas in the strongest terms for its indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilian populations. It is time this body acknowledges and finally designates Hamas as a terrorist organization.

Sole responsibility for this assault lies with Hamas. Israel has cooperated with all international bodies, including the United Nations, but the aggressive escalation from Gaza indicates that there are terrorist elements within the Gaza Strip pushing for further rounds of violence that will cause destruction and losses. Israel reserves the right, like any other State, to do everything necessary to protect its citizens.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Danny **Danon**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative